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Is There a Key To Successful Intelligence Efforts in the 1990's?

by

James V. Aldrich

A paper submitted to the faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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ABSTRACT

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This paper argues that increased utilization of military linguists is the key to ensuring successful Intelligence efforts in the 1990's. Training and current utilization of military linguists are examined. The complex missions facing Intelligence personnel in the 1990's are presented and are used to underscore the increasing need for linguists. Recommendations for greater utilization of linguists are proposed, to include: foreign language usage during exercises, use of linguists on Combatant Commanders' staffs, and increased use of linguists in National-level missions in support of military operations. The paper does not address Unit Language Training Programs or classroom and language lab initiatives which are used to sustain and enhance linguists' proficiency.

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Is There a Key To Successful Intelligence Efforts In The 1990's?

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Thesis: Increased utilization of military linguists is the key to successful Intelligence efforts in the 1990's.

Efforts to gather Intelligence will be more difficult in the 1990's. The rigidly structured political and military systems of the former USSR are being replaced by a host of new entities whose final forms are yet to be determined. The breakup of the USSR has resulted in a decrease or disappearance of Soviet influence in various satellite countries causing these countries' actions to be less predictable. In the 1990's two of the top National Military Objectives 1--Counternarcotics and Terrorism-- lack a clear structure and pose a tremendous challenge for Intelligence personnel. Finally, a burgeoning arms sale business adds to the herculean tasks which Intelligence personnel face: How to gather and maintain accurate information in order to produce Intelligence to support every eventuality within the commanders area of responsibility. Linguists are the key.

In order to provide a baseline for my thesis, the next chapter explains what Intelligence and the Intelligence cycle are. Chapter III provides a detailed explanation of what linguists are and Chapter IV outlines how linguists are utilized by each service. Chapters III and IV should clear up many myths

and misperceptions about linguists and provide a good transition to Chapter V which reveals how the 1990's mean even greater challenges and opportunities for linguists. Chapter VI provides several recommendations for the commander which, if implemented, will lead to successful Intelligence efforts. The final chapter contains conclusions.

Chapter II

INTELLIGENCE BY DEFINITION

In order to establish a reference point for the discussion of successful Intelligence efforts, it is necessary to understand what Intelligence is:

Intelligence-The product resulting from the collection, processing, integration, analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of available information concerning foreign countries or areas.²

There are those who think "...Intelligence is simply information...."³ Promulgation of this incorrect version of what Intelligence is causes some to compare the Intelligence effort with a news broadcast. Actually, the collection of information is one, of five, steps in the Intelligence cycle.⁴

- a. Planning and direction-Determination of Intelligence requirements, preparation of a collection plan, issuance of orders and requests to information collection agencies, and a continuous check on the productivity of the agencies.
- b. Collection-Acquisition of information and the provision of this information to processing and/or production elements.
- c. Processing-Conversion of collected information into a form suitable to the production of Intelligence.
- d. Production-Conversion of information into Intelligence

through the integration, analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of all source data and the preparation of Intelligence products in support of known or anticipated user requirements.

e. Dissemination-Conveyance of Intelligence to users in a suitable form.

Clearly, Intelligence is more than just information. If a border guard unit observes ground forces from a neighboring country conducting maneuvers near a common border, that is information. However, if there was additional information which--through integration with the border guard information, analysis of the neighboring countries known political intentions, history of military activity or inactivity in this area, and other factors--revealed that the maneuvers were not routine and were likely to be a precursor for other actions: the product of all that analysis and evaluation of information from several sources is Intelligence. Further, if our forces were not acting in conjunction with the border guard unit--meaning we obtained their report without their permission or knowledge--Intelligence personnel would have to consider the credibility and so forth of the border guard unit. Intelligence is not just information.

In the following chapters it will be argued that only linguists are capable of performing most of the collection, processing, analysis and evaluation of information which will produce Intelligence in the 1990's.

Chapter III

MILITARY LINGUISTS

All four services have military linguists trained in a wide range of languages. Despite the diverse nature of the linguist community, several generalities can be drawn⁶.

- a. The linguist community is large. There are approximately 16,500 language billets within DoD's active components.
- b. Most military linguists are enlisted. Commissioned and warrant officers constitute only about 18.5% of total language requirements.
- c. Over 80% of all military linguists--particularly enlisted personnel--serve in an Intelligence career field.
- d. Almost 60% of all language requirements are found within the U.S. Army.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Communications, Command, Control, and Intelligence) (ASD (C3I)) is the primary functional sponsor for foreign language training within DoD⁶. The Secretary of the Army has been designated as the Executive Agent for the Defense Foreign Language Program (DFLP) and is therefore responsible for management of the program on a DoD-wide basis⁷.

Over 90% of the initial training for military linguists is hosted by the Army at the Defense Language Institute, Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) located in Monterey, California, where about 4,500 military graduates are produced annually. The class

schedule is extremely demanding. In order to maximize instructor-student interaction, each class consists of no more than ten students. Regardless of the language being studied, or rank of the student, all students attend six hours of class per day, five days per week, with an average of three to five hours of homework each classday. The length of the course depends on the degree of language difficulty and ranges from 25-week courses in Spanish, French and other Romance languages to 47-week courses in more difficult languages like Russian, Korean, Japanese or Chinese, and finally to the 63-week course in Arabic.

Since the courses at DLIFLC are so demanding, it should not be surprising that there is student attrition. Despite stringent entrance requirements, about 25% of the students do not graduate. During FY89, 8.5% of all basic course students were dropped for administrative reasons (failure to obtain final security clearance, disciplinary problems, medical problems etc) while 16.3% were disenrolled for poor academic performance⁸.

Students at DLIFLC are taught more than just the foreign language. Most of the instructors are natives of the region where the target language is spoken. Instruction on the geography, culture, history, customs, religious beliefs, politics, some military and other items is interwoven into the language instruction. Moreover, the students have the experience of dealing with native speakers of the language on a daily basis in the class areas and at class functions held to reinforce cultural beliefs and customs. No one else in the Intelligence

Community has the opportunity for this type of exposure during their training process.

Additionally, there are three extremely important points which the commander must understand about training at DLIFLC:

First, the training of linguists is extremely expensive. It takes a total of 18 months and 125,000 dollars to train a Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) linguist in Russian⁹, and an additional four months and even more money to train one in Arabic. Thus, requests to train linguists are closely scrutinized by DLIFLC and service representatives¹⁰.

Second, despite the rigorous training at DLIFLC, graduates are not "fluent"¹¹ in the language. Upon completion of a course students take a Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) which determines skill levels in speaking, reading and listening¹². Although DLPT level 2 is the graduation standard, not all students achieve level 2 in each skill area tested¹³. Appendix I contains DLPT skill level descriptions.

Third, perhaps the most important point to remember is that most of the students have not completed training when they graduate from DLIFLC. Those graduates of DLIFLC designated for duty in the Intelligence field must report to other locations for follow-on training. About 75% of all graduates are designated for duty in SIGINT (also called Cryptology) and must attend up to 19 weeks of additional classes at Goodfellow Air Force Base in San Angelo, Texas. At Goodfellow, skills such as the operation of SIGINT equipment and the transcription of communications by

use of a transliteration system¹⁴ are taught. Appendix two contains examples of other skills required of SIGINT linguists.

Those Army graduates of DLIFLC designated to be Interrogators/Translators (Human Intelligence or HUMINT personnel) proceed to the Army's Intelligence Center at Fort Huachuca, Arizona for nine weeks of additional training, and Marines designated to be Interrogators/Translators attend a similar course at the Navy/Marine Corps Intelligence Training Center at Damneck, Virginia. These personnel learn the proper techniques for interrogating prisoners of war, debriefing defectors and other personnel, document exploitation and preparation of various reports.

It is critical that commanders realize graduates of courses at DLIFLC only, individuals who learned a foreign language at a civilian school, or individuals who grew up using English as a second language, are not capable of performing the duties of SIGINT or HUMINT linguists without additional training. Moreover, SIGINT and HUMINT linguists are not interchangeable. Thus, while commanders should be aware of all linguistic resources they may be able to utilize, SIGINT and HUMINT representatives should be consulted regarding the feasibility of utilizing individuals who possess foreign language proficiency but lack the requisite skills (and probably lack the appropriate security clearances) to perform specific linguistic functions.

Chapter IV

LINGUIST UTILIZATION

As noted in chapter III, the training pipelines for SIGINT and HUMINT linguists are extremely long and expensive. In view of the tremendous amount of time and money invested in these individuals, it seems readily apparent that commanders should place them in positions which will ensure maximum payoff for the investment. Unfortunately, this is not always done. The services use linguists as follows:

NAVY "...Individuals who work closely with the DFLP consistently give the Navy high marks for the management of their linguist corps...."¹⁶ Navy representatives to the DFLP Action Officers Committee¹⁸ believe the Navy has an advantage regarding linguist utilization because the Navy's operational tempo is higher than that of the other services. Perhaps there is merit to what these representatives profess. Over 70% of the Navy's linguists (1,377 enlisted and 372 officer billets) work in SIGINT and can expect repetitive assignments to realworld¹⁷, Intelligence collection duties that maximize the use of foreign language capabilities¹⁸. Also, the Navy is the only service which has created a separate "pool" of linguists at the National Security Agency (NSA). These linguists are not assigned to NSA, but to the Naval Security Group Activity located there on Fort Meade. They can take advantage of training and temporary operational assignments at NSA, but are used in Direct Support of

the Navy's operating forces thereby increasing their opportunity to participate in realworld Intelligence efforts.

The Navy also gets high marks for the rather unique concept regarding use of in-theater linguists for Direct Support of the Fleet. Instead of embarking linguists from CONUS, deploying ships typically are augmented by linguists whom they pick up in-theater because these linguists have current mission experience.

AIR FORCE The Air Force has 3,293 enlisted and 626 officer linguist requirements¹⁹. Like the other services, the majority of the Air Force's linguists are involved in SIGINT and, similar to the Navy, are assigned to a wide variety of operational assignments at National and tactical-level units. Because a large portion of the Air Force's SIGINT linguists work in aircraft, they must undergo water survival training and other training required of flight crews. This obviously adds to the training pipelines and is another reason why commanders can't just "grab" someone who happens to speak a particular foreign language and use them as a SIGINT linguist²⁰.

MARINE CORPS The Marine Corps has about 800 enlisted billets for linguists and 100 officer billets which require foreign language proficiency. Over 780 of the enlisted billets are for Intelligence personnel: 80% SIGINT and 20% HUMINT. Marine foreign language requirements, like the other services, are primarily in Russian, Spanish, Korean, and Arabic with only a few requirements in languages like Tagalog²¹, Persian-Farsi²², Urdu²³, and other Third World languages.

The Marine Corps has linguists assigned to National-level missions at NSA and other locations, but, like the Army, the majority of Marine language billets are in tactical units which have no realworld mission for linguists. Marine linguists in tactical units must undergo training on various topics and equipment pertinent to their military occupational specialty and essential Marine combat skills. Linguists ~~are~~ used to conduct communications security (COMSEC) monitoring of own forces during training exercises, but since all of the communications are in english, this does nothing for the linguists' proficiency in a foreign language.

Marine linguists are also assigned to each Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) for about 14 months at a time (210 days predeployment work, 180 days deployment, and 30 days post deployment) during which time they are ~~not~~ available for operational missions elsewhere and during which time they rarely--if ever--use their foreign language. The concept of having them with the MEU for contingency purposes seems valid, but the fact remains they rarely use their language skills. Aperiodically, linguists in tactical-level units are assigned temporarily to National-level missions.

ARMY With over 10,000 authorizations and approximately 60% of all DoD language requirements, the Army's language program dwarfs all other services²⁴. Similar to the Marine Corps, over half of all Army linguists are assigned to tactical units whose primary mission is combat readiness/training vice realworld

Intelligence collection²⁶. Therefore, these units have a tremendous challenge in ensuring linguists maintain proficiency. Army units with linguists assigned do conduct aggressive unit language programs and have placed increasing emphasis on this issue in the past two to three years.

Despite the differing numbers of linguists and differing linguist duty assignments among the services, certain generalizations can be made:

- a. It is a well-documented fact that linguists must use their language in order to maintain or increase proficiency. "...If you don't use it, you lose it...."²⁸ All of the services, in particular the Army and Marine Corps, have linguists who are not afforded an opportunity to utilize their language in an operational environment. Moreover, as forces are withdrawn from Europe and other overseas (forward) locations, ships are decommissioned, and budget constraints limit flying and steaming hours, all services will have a greater percentage of personnel in a garrison versus operational environment.
- b. The tremendous amount of training and money invested in linguists is wasted if the individual reports to a unit, never uses the foreign language outside a classroom, and then refuses to reenlist. This is occurring too often. The extremely expensive, well-trained linguist community is being replaced every four years, and the retention problem is particularly acute in the Army.²⁷

c. There is virtually no foreign language usage in exercises for any service. All communications are conducted in english, as are all interrogations. Document exploitation of english documents is likewise unrealistic. The use of "english only" does nothing to prepare linguists for realworld scenarios and does nothing to help identify potential linguistic problems (or solutions to same) pertinent to these areas.

d. Operational orders do not include instructions on how to obtain linguistic support from National and Theater resources²⁸. Thus, commanders are not aware of linguistic resources which could be made available and "shortage of linguists" is often identified as a problem when there were actually linguists in other services or locales which were not being utilized²⁸.

Chapter V

REQUIREMENTS IN THE 1990'S

Throughout the Cold War years the vast majority of Intelligence training and resources (equipment and personnel) were devoted to Intelligence efforts against the USSR. The services, especially the Navy³⁰, simply did not have a concerted effort to develop training or equipment geared to Intelligence efforts against so-called Third World countries. Thus, there are few Intelligence officers with expertise on areas which are not associated with the former USSR.³¹ This fact, coupled with the fact that most of the National Military Objectives for the 1990's are not related to the "Soviet problem", means only linguists have the requisite training to collect and analyze information pertinent to these areas.

First. Counternarcotics: Efforts to stop the flow of illegal drugs into the United States requires a tremendous amount of resources. The military services are playing an integral part in this effort and linguists have a key role. The drug shipments originate in foreign countries (principally in Latin America and the so-called Golden Triangle region of Southeast Asia/South Pacific) so most of the written or spoken information regarding the shipments is passed in a *foreign language*. Moreover, much of the vocabulary used is unique to the world of illegal drugs and requires additional linguistic skills. Only linguists have the requisite training in order to function effectively in this

regard³². Some might argue that the military has a lot of native speakers to use in this effort, but as one member of a Marine Interrogator/Translator unit stated, "...The fact that a Marine speaks a language other than English does not make him an expert on the cultural, social, political, religious, and historical backgrounds of those countries in which this language is spoken...."³³ In order to analyze and evaluate information one must have an understanding of these factors in addition to knowledge of the language itself.

Besides traditional Intelligence information gathering duties, linguists are being utilized in other roles in the Counternarcotics arena: The Marine Corps has deployed language-trained Mobile Training Teams (MTT's) for riverine training in support of Counternarcotics efforts in Latin America, (especially Columbia) and has deployed reconnaissance/Intelligence teams to Peru to assist in the formation of 10 Peruvian reconnaissance platoons that will focus on narco-traffickers³⁴.

Second, Terrorism: There are numerous terrorist organizations, but I will use the infamous Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to illustrate the necessity for linguists in this effort. Nearly everyone has heard a news broadcast which stated that a PLO terrorist perpetrated some devious act. Unfortunately, that statement is a gross simplification of what actually transpired. There are numerous factions within the PLO and it really does make a difference if Yasser Arafat's³⁵ moderate Fatah group was involved versus one of the more radical

groups led and backed by someone else.

An Arabic linguist assigned duties regarding the PLO knows that the PLO is composed of numerous factions, and has been trained to discern one group from another. Based on the vocabulary used, the linguist can typically figure out which organization originated the information because certain words or phrases are unique to some organizations or geographic areas. For example, a linguist knows that Yasser Arafat is referred to as "the supreme commander". The linguist also knows that certain vocabulary words have meanings not found in the dictionary. For instance, the word "KTIB?"³⁶ means battalion in Arabic³⁷. However, certain entities use this word to refer to Phalangists who compose a right-wing, nationalist faction in Lebanon. Only a linguist (not just someone who has proficiency in Arabic) is trained to think about things like this. Certainly it would make a difference if there were two battalions, vice two phalangists, preparing to attack a U.S. installation!

Third, Humanitarian Assistance: Linguists can play key roles in the successful accomplishment of this National Military Objective also. Besides being able to read signs and ask directions or other information of indigenous personnel, they can also interact with the personnel who are willing to facilitate the humanitarian efforts. Also, the linguists can concurrently gather HUMINT information in order to help determine what the local political, military, and economic situations are, and what the ramifications of the U.S. actions are likely to be.

Fourth, Arms Control: "...Arms control has become a growth industry for Intelligence...."³⁸ It is in our national interest to know the military capabilities of potential adversaries. As the former USSR endeavors to export arms and arms technology to virtually anyone with hard currency, and other arms exporters like France, China and Germany conduct arms sales to various Third World countries, keeping track of "who has what" will be very difficult. HUMINT and SIGINT resources will have to be used in this effort, and since nearly all of the communications and documents which we may be able to exploit will be in a foreign language, only Linguists can collect, process, analyze and, in most instances, evaluate the information. It is extremely naive to think arms sales are going to be reported accurately, if at all, in open sources.

Perhaps the most overt use of linguists in the Arms Control arena will be within the On-Site Inspection Agency (OSIA). "...OSIA needs 261 of the best [Russian] linguists within about a year and four months [meaning May, 1991]...."³⁹ The OSIA conducts various types of inspections at Soviet missile facilities such as the one at Votkinsk⁴⁰. Due to the complexity of the inspections, the linguists (already proficient to at least DLFT level 2) must attend a 27-week course at DLIFLC geared specifically to vocabulary used in the treaties and weapons systems and to raising the linguists' proficiency level to DLPT level 3. Additionally, the linguists are screened for maturity and judgment due to the nature of the work and the fact

that all of the Soviet counterparts are officers.

There are two linguists assigned to each ten-member team. The linguists/teams travel about the former USSR, observe weapons systems, and review documentation regarding weapons capabilities, while absorbing local news and information from personal observation. These linguists perform a critical function and concurrently provide tremendous amounts of Intelligence information. As the treaties are implemented other languages besides Russian may be required.⁴¹

Fifth, Paramilitary Forces: In regions where instability is increasing due to the withdrawal of Soviet support, or other reasons, paramilitary forces will play key roles in the struggle for power. We have witnessed this situation in Lebanon since the civil war erupted in 1975. Each former president maintains a sort of loyal militia, former members of the Lebanese Army make up another faction, and numerous other factions operate throughout the country supporting a Christian cause, a Moslem cause, an anti-Israeli cause or some version of these. The Philippines, many of the Latin American countries, and most of Eastern Europe seem to be almost as complicated when one tries to figure out who is in charge and what their intentions are. As in other mission areas, linguists will be used to collect, analyze, and evaluate information, but their ability to discern one group from another will also be crucial to mission accomplishment.

Chapter VI

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COMMANDER

Information is power, and the ability to communicate effectively can alter the balance of power as surely as a squadron of fighter planes or a navy flotilla. Security can come only when we see the world as it is, not as we would like it to be.⁴²

The following recommendations for the Combatant Commanders are presented to facilitate their efforts to "see the world as it is" and make wise decisions regarding how linguists will be utilized in the 1990's:

First, Know What Your Linguistic Assets Are.

Each of the services maintains a database which lists every individual who has taken a DLPT. Major commands have the ability to view this information and therefore determine how many individuals have been tested in a particular language, what the test results are, where the members are currently assigned and so forth. Besides being used to ascertain what SIGINT and HUMINT linguists may be available, location of those individuals who have served on Personnel Exchange Program (PEP), Attache, or Foreign Area Officer (FAO)⁴³ tours of duty can be accomplished via this database. Those individuals typically have good language skills and in-country experience which can contribute to the Intelligence effort, particularly in crisis situations. However, someone must be tested in order to be included in the

database. Commanders should promulgate instructions to subordinate commands directing them to have members who profess foreign language proficiency to take the DLPT. You cannot use an asset if you don't know you have it! Relatedly, commanders should rely on SIGINT and HUMINT linguists to determine what linguistic functions the individuals are suited to perform.

Second, Use Your Linguists.

"...Many linguists leave the service because they do not receive the opportunity to work in their school-trained MOS...."⁴⁴ If linguists are afforded an opportunity to use their language they will invariably improve their linguistic skills, realize a sense of duty satisfaction, and be more likely to stay in the service. This is not merely a reenlistment issue. The only way to develop a cadre of skilled linguists is through retention of those with experience. Due to the long training pipelines, and attrition at DLIFLC, replacements are hard to come by. This seems to be rather straight forward, yet, as pointed out in chapter IV, retention is a problem and one which is particularly acute in the Army. In an era wherein missions like OSIA require levels of language proficiency greater than that achieved in initial training at DLIFLC, utilization and retention of our best linguists are key to mission accomplishment. The Navy's Direct Support concepts may work well for others too.

Third. Incorporate Linguists Into Exercises.

One way to enhance our linguists' skills and therefore our Intelligence gathering capability is by "...Integrating linguists

into exercises of the Unified Command...."⁴⁵ As noted in chapter IV, conducting COMSEC monitoring of english transmissions or conducting POW interrogations in english does nothing to improve foreign language skills. Moreover, the use of "english only" in most exercises creates false expectations amongst commanders who think the linguists' ability to conduct these functions in a foreign language will equal that of the english version. Commanders should consider having "POW's" with foreign language skills be captured and interrogated in the foreign language. "Captured documents" in a foreign language could likewise be added into exercise scenarios. Also, the National Security Agency has standing procedures which allow scripted SIGINT information to be incorporated into exercises.⁴⁶ While these recommendations entail alot of work (which the linguists will also benefit by doing), the potential payoffs are great.

By implementing these procedures, the commander will see results which will (opposed to "english only" exercises) provide a much more accurate picture of what the forces' Intelligence capabilities are against a force which uses a certain language. Also, exercises incorporating linguists seems to be a perfect way to integrate personnel from the different services. Army Interrogators could work against Marine "POW's" who speak the same foreign language and SIGINT linguists could work against each other also. The best linguists could serve as evaluators. These exercises could be Command Post exercises for ease of control, or force-on-force exercises with certain radio

frequencies declared "off limits" as they are for jamming.

Fourth, Assign Linguists To Combatant Commanders' Staffs

I was flabbergasted to discover there are no linguists on the Central Command (CENTCOM) staff.⁴⁷ If there were linguists on the staff, issues such as "utilizing linguists in exercises" and incorporating instructions on "how to obtain linguistic support" into operational orders (mentioned in chapter IV) would likely receive appropriate attention. Also, when members of CENTCOM travel to the various countries in the CENTCOM AOR linguists could be used to help build good working relations with counterparts from the host countries. As mentioned previously, they have considerable training on the peoples' customs and traditions, the emotional impact of a particular foreign language, and certain other idiosyncracies pertinent to personality and patience (or lack thereof) for the cultures.

As long as we send people to the countries in CENTCOM's AOR who can converse in "english only" we will never understand how our counterparts think, will not build solid relations with counterparts, and therefore will never understand why they react the way they do to certain issues. There is research which supports this conclusion by pointing out how the Soviet Union's advisory mission in Egypt was a classic example of how the failure to deal effectively with cultural aspects of a military program can lead to its failure.⁴⁸

One who is not familiar with the Arabic language might assume all of the Arabic countries within CENTCOM's AOR speak the

same version of Arabic. This is categorically false. Each country has vast differences in dialect usage and one (even an Arab) who speaks Arabic-Egyptian will not understand some things spoken in Arabic-Iraqi. They are two separate 63-week courses at DLIFLC. If the CENTCOM staff does not understand these basic things, how can they possibly orchestrate successful Intelligence efforts against potential adversaries in the AOR? How can they possibly develop solid, long-lasting working relations with friendly countries in the AOR? A CENTCOM report⁴⁹ leads me to believe we did not learn much from the Soviet's failure.

Fifth, Use Linguists in the Biggest Payoff Missions

"...SIGINT produces the greatest volume of new Intelligence information, and it is usually the most timely as well. A SIGINT "hit" arrives within seconds and can be passed on to senior policymakers, in some cases, within minutes...."⁵⁰ "...SIGINT is the single most reliable source of Intelligence and is particularly useful in confirming information received from other sources...."⁵¹ These quotes are not presented to suggest that Combatant Commanders request every linguist be trained to perform SIGINT functions. However, if the Combatant Commander has a choice of allowing a Component Commander to use SIGINT linguists in a 14-month MEU cycle (as discussed in chapter IV) as opposed to a realworld mission pertinent to the AOR, perhaps the MEU can do without the linguists for awhile. Even if the linguists are temporarily assigned to a National-level agency, commanders will benefit from the Intelligence they help produce and, later on,

from the experience they gain.

This same pay-off choice can be applied to HUMINT linguists. Some HUMINT linguists who are assigned to tactical units should be incorporated, for permanent and temporary duty, into the Combatant Commanders' staffs in order to participate in trips to the AOR. HUMINT linguists rely more on speaking skills than do SIGINT linguists and this seems to be a perfect way for them to gain experience while also building better relations with the host countries. The tactical units would benefit also by the return of more skilled, and probably more motivated, linguists.

Sixth, Integrate All Services' Assets

"...The forces developed and trained to perform the primary functions assigned to one service will be employed to support and supplement the other services when such participation will result in increased effectiveness and contribute to the accomplishment of military objectives...."⁵² If this principle is applied to operations, then there is nothing wrong with having an Air Force unit support Army and/or Marine Corps units by providing airborne SIGINT collection assets. This seems to make more sense than having assets from three different services collecting information and then not being able to share it because the systems used are not interoperable. Use of this principle would mean personnel on the ground would have one (vice three) computer-based system to deal with. If necessary, Army and Marine Corps linguists could augment the Air Force crews. Integrate people to fit those systems which are interoperable.

Chapter VII

CONCLUSIONS

"...Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril...."⁵⁸

Intelligence efforts are inextricably tied to National Military Objectives and mission accomplishment. The diverse nature of missions in the 1990's makes it more impractical than ever to expect Intelligence officers to be trained on the political, military and cultural aspects of each potential adversary, or of our allies who speak a foreign language. Linguists receive this training as a matter of course, but will remain an underutilized resource unless recommendations like those outlined in this paper are implemented.

- In summary, Combatant Commanders have two choices:
1. Maintain the status quo, wherein linguists are literally "thrown away" because they do not use their language skills, proficiency atrophies, retention of linguists is an acute problem, exercises in "english only" create false expectations regarding language skills, and Intelligence suffers.
 - OR
 2. Implement the recommendations I have outlined wherein assets are known, linguists are utilized in a broader range of activities, linguists' proficiency increases, retention inevitably increases, a cadre of more skilled linguists is formed and the quality of Intelligence improves at all levels.

APPENDIX I
DLPT SKILL LEVELS

The following information was extracted from AR350-20/OPNAVINST 1550.7B/AFR 50-40/MCO 1550.4D which is the Joint Regulation on the Defense Foreign Language Program.

Interagency Language Roundtable Language Skill Level Descriptions range from 0 to 5:

0 = No Proficiency

0+ = Memorized Proficiency

1 = Elementary Proficiency

1+ = Elementary Proficiency, Plus

2 = Limited Working Proficiency

2+ = Limited Working Proficiency, Plus

3 = General Professional Proficiency

3+ = General Professional Proficiency, Plus

4 = Advanced Professional Proficiency

4+ = Advanced Professional Proficiency, Plus

5 = Functionally Native Proficiency

The DLPT is structured to test only level 3 and below. The evaluation of foreign language proficiency above DLPT level 3 is done by interview with a native speaker.

The most common levels of foreign language proficiency among military linguists are level 1+ to level 3 so I have provided narrative descriptions of these levels only. Complete details on all levels are contained in Appendix F of the Joint Regulation.

Speaking

Level 1+: Can initiate and maintain predictable face-to-face conversations and satisfy limited social demands. The individual is able to satisfy most travel and accommodation needs and a limited range of social demands beyond exchange of skeletal biographic information. Pronunciation is understandable to natives used to dealing with foreigners.

Level 2: Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can handle with confidence, but not with facility, most normal, high-frequency social conversational situations including extensive, but casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family and autobiographical information. Can give and understand complicated, detailed, and extensive directions and make non-routine changes in travel and accommodation arrangements.

Level 2+: Able to satisfy most work requirements with language usage that is often, but not always, acceptable and effective. The individual shows considerable ability to communicate effectively on topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence.

Level 3: Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. Can use the language as part of normal professional duties such as answering objections, clarifying points, justifying decisions, understanding the essence of challenges.

stating and defending policy, or delivering briefings.

Listening

Level 1+: Sufficient comprehension to understand short conversations about all survival needs and limited social demands. Shows spontaneity in understanding by speed, although consistency of understanding is uneven. Cannot sustain understanding of coherent structures in longer utterances or in unfamiliar situations.

Level 2: Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations on routine social demands and limited job requirements. Can follow essential points of discussion or speech at an elementary level on topics in his/her special professional field.

Level 2+: Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social demands and most conversations on work requirements as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to particular interest and special fields of competence. Often shows remarkable ability and ease of understanding, but under tension or pressure may break down.

Level 3: Able to understand the essentials of all speech in a standard dialect including technical discussions within a special field. Understands hypothesizing and supported opinions. Does not understand native speakers if they speak very quickly or use some slang or dialect. Can often detect emotional overtones. Can understand implications.

Reading

Level 1+: Sufficient comprehension to understand simple discourse in printed form for informative social purposes. Can read material such as announcements of public events, simple prose containing biographical information or narration of events, and straightforward newspaper headlines. May need to read materials several times for understanding.

Level 2: Sufficient comprehension to read simple, authentic written material in a form equivalent to usual printing or typescript on subjects within a familiar context. Can locate and understand the main ideas and details in material written for the general reader.

Level 2+: Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual material in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special professional interests. The individual is able to use linguistic context and realworld knowledge to make sensible guesses about unfamiliar material.

Level 3: Able to read within a normal range of speed and with almost complete comprehension a variety of authentic prose material on unfamiliar subjects. Reading ability is not dependent on subject matter knowledge, although it is not expected that the individual can comprehend thoroughly subject matter which is outside his/her general experience and not accompanied by explanation.

APPENDIX II

SKILLS REQUIRED OF SIGINT LINGUISTS

The following SIGINT linguist skill requirements (not a comprehensive listing) were extracted from Marine Corps Order P1200.7 (Marine MOS Manual) and are typical of skills required of SIGINT linguists in all services.

Prepare radio intercept receivers, antennas, and recording and associated power supply equipment for operation.

Conduct radio monitor operations and record designated foreign voice transmissions.

Dub appropriate comments on recording tapes to assist in the transcription/translation and analysis of material.

Aurally recognize general classes of non-Morse communications, voice systems and data systems normally encountered in the performance of an intercept mission.

Use proper transcription format and know approved methods of indicating missing or garbled portions of messages.

Assist in the conduct of Electronic Warfare (EW)/COMSEC monitoring operations.

Take bearings on signals appearing on designated frequencies.

Employ technical aids used in direction-finding operations and recognize and report occurrences that will assist supervisory personnel in the accomplishment of the mission.

Transcribe from recorded playback a short selection of the target country formatted voice communications of the type routinely encountered in the performance of intercept missions.

Assist analytic personnel in recovering additions and changes to code and cryptographic systems.

Describe the appropriate techniques and criteria for direction-finding site selection.

As noted in the discussion of Air Force linguists, linguists of any service who serve in aircraft would have to undergo additional, flight-related training.

NOTES

1. Naval War College, National Military Strategy for the 1990's. (Naval War College Publication 2129), p. 10.
2. Joint Chiefs of Staff, DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, (JCS Publication 1-02), p. 184.
3. Judith A. Gallina, "The Come As You Are War: Preventing the Intelligence Failure" (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 1990), p. 6.
4. JCS Publication 1-02, p. 185.
5. Terrance M. Ford, "The Adequacy of the Army's Foreign Language Program", (U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa: 1990), P. 21.
6. Department of Defense, "Defense Language Program" (DoD Directive 5160.41, Washington, D.C. 1977), p. 2.
7. Ibid, p. 3.
8. Ford, p. 47.
9. Ford, p. 4.
10. U.S. Marine Corps, "Management of the Defense Foreign Language Program", (MCO 1550.4D, Washington, D.C., 1977). Contains information on the entire process for requesting training allocations. This is a Joint Regulation which is also published as AR-350-20, OPNAVINST 1550.7B, and AFR 50-40.
11. Many times someone is said to be "fluent" in a language when test scores do not support that claim. Commanders and planners should ask for verification of professed skills.
12. Writing is taught but is not tested because SIGINT linguists (about 75% of all students) use a transliteration system (note 14) to process foreign languages and other linguists are rarely required to write in a foreign language.
13. According to the Ford paper, about 80% of the students in the Romance languages achieve level 2 on the test. The percentage of students who achieve level 2 in the more difficult languages is less than that despite the increased course lengths.

14. Transliteration is the representation of a foreign language by the use of English characters. This process enables a SIGINT linguist to type a foreign language using an English typewriter or computer, thereby allowing the information to be processed by other English-language-based equipment.

15. Ford, p. 109.

16. Committee comprised of representatives from each service, the National Security Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the DLIFLC which meets monthly to discuss foreign language issues for DoD.

17. Term often used to refer to actual operational missions as opposed to those tasks associated with exercises or training evolutions.

18. Ford, p. 102.

19. Ford, p. 107.

20. Unfortunately, there is a prevalent perception among non-linguists that anyone who knows a foreign language can be used as a linguist.

21. Principal language spoken in the Philippines.

22. Principal language spoken in Iran. Often confused with Arabic, it is actually a totally different language.

23. Principal language spoken in Pakistan.

24. Ford, p. 109.

25. Ford, p. 110.

26. Comment made repeatedly by instructors at DLIFLC and by other personnel associated with the DFLP. This generalization is backed up by considerable research conducted by the DLIFLC.

27. Ford, pp. 35, 36.

28. Wesley A. Groesbeck, "Our Burgeoning Linguist Gap", Army, Dec., 1988, p. 25.

29. Operation Just Cause, Lesson Learned: Joint Universal Lessons Learned System (JULLS) nr 20736-25313 (04926), concerns a "shortage of Spanish linguists" for the subject operation, yet there were apparently no efforts made to use linguists from the other services, or from outside the theater of operations. The comment that the Army needs to train more Spanish linguists is based on a myopic view of the issue.

Operation Desert Storm, Lesson Learned: JULLS nr 50851-61870 (06337) concerns a "shortage of Arabic linguists" which hindered operations. During the operation part of this shortage could have been alleviated by using Marine Arabic linguists deployed with 4th and 5th MEB offshore. One might argue, they should have stayed with the MEBs because they might have been needed. This argument does not have much merit, however, after it became apparent to everyone the MEBs were not going to land.

30. Gallina, p. 16.

31. A review of the curricula used by the services to train Intelligence officers reveals a great deal of time is devoted to the "Soviet Problem" while Third World issues comprise an incredibly small amount of any curriculum.

32. Linguists assigned to the Counternarcotics effort receive training on specific vocabulary, communications procedures and other matters pertinent to the mission in addition to the training they have received at DLIFLC and the normal follow-on schools for their skill designator.

33. Peter A. Halle, "Our Language Skills", Marine Corps Gazette, Aug, 1989, p. 52.

34. U.S. Marine Corps, "Marine Corps Counternarcotics Update", Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps letter 3000 SO/LIC, 22 July, 1991.

35. Chairman of the PLO executive committee and leader of the largest group--Fatah--within the PLO.

36. Official transliteration form of the word. A U.S. newspaper would probably list it as "kateeba".

37. Hans Wehr, Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, (Cornell University Press, 1966), p. 813.

38. John Macartney, "Intelligence: What It Is and How To Use It", (Naval War College Publication 3182), p. 14.

39. Department of the Army, "DFLP General Officer Steering Committee (GOSC) Summary Report for 25 Jan, 1990", Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans letter, 23 Apr, 1990.

40. City located about 600 miles East of Moscow.

41. Department of the Army letter 23 Apr, 1990.

42. Senator Paul Simon, quoted by Robert T. McCarty, "Language: A Tough Training Challenge", Military Intelligence, Oct, 1990, p. 18.

43. Primarily an Army program, although the other services do participate with a few officers each year. Officers attend a language course at DLIFLC and are then assigned duty (follow-on training) in a country where the language is spoken.

44. Groesbeck, p. 24.

45. Groesbeck, p. 24.

46. The NSA has a published United States Signals Intelligence Directive (USSID) which governs the use of "Exercise SIGINT". The Intelligence staff will have access to this document.

47. Based on discussions with several members who served with CENTCOM until the Summer of 1991. I chose CENTCOM to use as an example because I have served in the CENTCOM AOR as an Arabic SIGINT linguist.

48. Naval War College Center for Advanced Research, The Cultural Impact of U.S.-Arab Military Relations, (Naval War College, Newport, RI: 1981).

49. "...We learned that national pride, politics and public perception play as large a role in determining relationships as military requirements...." This comment was extracted from USCINCCENT After Action Report on Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm and Exercise Internal Look 90, P. 18. I find it astounding this had to be "learned" in 1990!

50. Macartney, p. 6.

51. Armed Forces Staff College, Intelligence for Joint Forces, (Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Va: 1990), Publication 5, chap 4.

52. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Unified Action Armed Forces-Principles Governing Functions Within DoD, (JCS Publication 0-2, Washington, D.C., 1990), P. 1-3. 1-4.

53. Samuel B. Griffith, Sun Tzu: The Art of War, (Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 84.

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